

May, 1982

Volume 7, No. 2

Decade of Achievement



Andrew Murphy and his instructor, Kathy Lee demonstrate Blissapple to visitors at 10th Anniversary celebration.

by Janet May

Words ultimately fail when trying to convey the intensity and variation of responses evident at the Ontario Crippled Children's Centre on Friday, May 14.

Blissymbol Day culminated with the coming together of over two hundred people at the Centre to celebrate a decade of achievement in the use of Blissymbols as an augmentative communication system.

Pleasure was expressed in being able to see and talk with many of the original pioneers. This included eight of the ten first classmates and several of the original team.

Hallways carried symbol signs that directed everyone to the gymnasium, where the accomplishments were graphically displayed. The story of growth was told — of how many people's lives have been touched in the many countries around the world. The displays showed in publications and materials, the care taken to retain the standards established through the Symbol Office. Electronic and micro-processor-based aids spoke of the new era

that is opening doors, once tightly closed, to the handicapped. This technology presents a new challenge to BCI and ACS that is being met in the eighties, just as "finding a better way", challenged the first team in 1971.

In an auditorium that was filled to capacity, requiring the over-flow to watch the proceedings on closed-circuit television in the gym, people gathered to observe with eyes and ears, the presentations.

Barbara Kates reminisced about the first five years. The anecdotes highlighted the successes, made light of the set-backs, but never negated the hard, day by day work that was necessary to keep the dream alive.

In introducing Shirley McNaughton, George Wilson, Chairman of the Board, acknowledged that without the vision, tenacity and perseverance that Shirley brought to her task, this evening might not have happened.

As Shirley recalled through words and slides the growth, development and spread of Blissymbolics, those of us newer in involvement began to appreciate the

difference that this system has made and continues to make.

As friends and strangers mingled in the lounge to enjoy refreshments and recalled their moments in the story, the faces revealed their pleasure in being there to share in this milestone.

Part of the fun of a party is receiving the good wishes of people who cannot be present. Greetings from around the world were read and gifts appreciated. Typical of the warm thoughts expressed in all the messages received was the calendar lovingly prepared by Dutch Bliss children for the Bliss children in Ontario. Accompanying it was the hope that all at BCI might have the "energy, patience, and wisdom" to continue what was started ten years ago.

BCI's Tenth Anniversary Celebration was a compelling reminder of the philosophy, intention and commitment that undergirds the Blissymbolics Communication Institute and its Affiliates and associates around the world. The celebration's theme said it all —

PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE

Challenges Continue For BCI

FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

The past twelve months have been challenging ones for the Blissymbols Communication Institute. Staff members are to be commended for their loyalty and support during this period of management change, financial restraint and program evaluation.

I along with my fellow board members, feel very encouraged by the staff's accomplishments in recent months and by their planning toward increased self-sufficiency in 1983.

We look forward to the Institute's continuing support of Blissymbols in Ontario and to working with our Affiliates to maintain system and training standards in Canada and around the world.

The Board of Directors has welcomed as new members during the past year: David Woods, Margaret Hockman, Louis Lazonic, Ted Tafel. Their interest in Blissymbols and their business and service club experience is strengthening the

support the Board can bring to the Institute staff. To those who have completed their term of office in 1981, Tom Davidson, Watson Muter and Bud Robinson, we extend our thanks for believing in and helping the Institute in its early years.

The Tenth Anniversary Celebration emphasized to us all the value of the Institute's role as we met with Blissymbol users, their families, the professionals with whom they work and the many supportive persons in the Blissymbol community. We are proud to be associated with the Institute as it facilitates the use of Blissymbols with communicatively handicapped persons around the world.

George Wilson,
Chairman, Board of Directors

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Although our fiscal year extends from January to December, our activity year must be thought of from May to April — the period between North American Affiliate meetings. At our recent annual meeting at Hutton Hills Conference Centre, we were able, along with our Affiliates, to describe the past year as one requiring a pulling back financially but a moving ahead creatively — as we responded to the times.

During the past twelve months, much energy has been devoted to services in Ontario. Over one-third of our Elementary Training participants have come from Ontario; we have maintained a close association with the Augmentative Communication Service of the Ontario Crippled Children's Centre (OCCC); we have developed a vocational assessment and training program at BCI in co-operation with Vocational Rehabilitation Services of Ontario; we have initiated research projects along with the Department of Rehabilitation Engineering, OCCC; we have developed a reference library for use by Toronto and region students; we have undertaken many speaking engagements throughout Ontario.

The continued financial support by the Easter Seal Society — Ontario, the Ontario Crippled Children's Centre, the Conn Smythe Research Foundation and the Ontario Government has been greatly appreciated, along with the growing support and interest from Ontario Service Clubs.

Pilot Clubs of Ontario, Zonta Club of Toronto 1, The Toronto Kiwanis Club, and B'Nai Brith have given much needed help to the Institute through volunteer projects, community awareness activities and funding assistance.

Internationally, the Institute has contributed to Elementary Training Sessions in the United States, Bermuda, Belgium, Spain, Switzerland, France, Italy, and West Germany.

In April, I had the pleasure of attending the meeting of European Affiliates hosted in Wallingford, England at which thirteen Blissymbol-using countries were represented. Through-

out this meeting and indeed throughout the past year, there has been a spirit of mutual co-operation and support which has characterized the application of Blissymbols for non-speaking persons from its earliest years. The experienced countries give guidance to the beginning countries, and although financial resources are always strained, a way to help is found. In 1981, professionals from the United Kingdom, travelled to Portugal, Zimbabwe and the Netherlands to give the first training in these countries as, in earlier years, Canadian professionals helped their counterparts in the United States, the United Kingdom, Sweden, New Zealand, Spain, France, Switzerland and India to make their start.

During this past year, we have worked on several publications. Soon to be released will be Leesa Ovrarm's *Introducing Blissymbols — A Guide To Parents and Friends*. Second printings of Anne Warrick's *Blissymbols for Preschoolers* and Eugene T. McDonald's *Teaching and Using Blissymbols* have been completed. Work is underway on a *Self-Study Workbook* and the revision of the *Handbook of Blissymbols*. Many other projects are in the seed stage and offer exciting new communication materials for the future.

The Institute is indeed fortunate to look ahead to the 1982-83 year with new and capable staff members, with a supportive and expanded Board of Directors and with the assurance that Blissymbols have an important role to play within the developing microprocessor technology and the broad field of Augmentative Communication.

Our Tenth Anniversary celebration on May 14 was personally very gratifying. It rekindled for us all, the resolve to continue developing and supporting the use of Blissymbols wherever they can be of assistance to non-speaking persons.

Shirley McNaughton,
Director

BCI Annual Report

BLISSYMBOLICS COMMUNICATION INSTITUTE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1981

	Year ended December 31, 1981 (dollars)
REVENUE	
Easter Seal Society	222,579
Grants	5,000
Income from materials, training, and subscriptions	281,096
Film Donations	19,928
General Donations	3,659
	532,262
EXPENDITURES	
Operational expenses	342,917
Materials, training, subscription expenses	148,615
Film Expense	40,730
	532,262
NET REVENUE FOR THE YEAR	—

Special thanks

BCI wishes to express its appreciation for the interest and financial assistance given by the *Easter Seal Society — Ontario* and other supporting organizations in 1981:

1. ONTARIO CRIPPLED CHILDREN'S CENTRE
2. CONN SMYTHE RESEARCH FOUNDATION
3. ONTARIO MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
4. PILOT CLUBS OF ONTARIO
5. ZONTA CLUB OF TORONTO I
6. TORONTO KIWANIS CLUB
7. TEXAS INSTRUMENTS
8. TELE-RADIO SYSTEMS LIMITED
9. LEONARD MAYZEL ONTARIO LODGE OF B'NAI BRITH CANADA

The Market Place

Seminar Kit

The BCI Training Department working with the OCCC Augmentative Communication Service has produced an "In-service Seminar Kit". It is designed for people who have had Elementary Training and wish to give a seminar about Blissymbols. The Kit contains information on how to prepare, organize and present the seminar and contains slides, overheads and lecture notes for a day-long seminar.

This is a complete how-to-do-it kit which can greatly reduce the work of any trained Blissymbol instructor who has the responsibility of staff and community orientations.

The price is \$155.00 including Provincial tax, and is available through BCI. It can be purchased only by instructors who have completed Elementary Training.

People Helping People



10th Anniversary T-Shirt

Blue T-shirts with navy symbols and English translation, introduced at the Blissymbol Day at the Ontario Crippled Children's Centre, are available in adult sizes, small, medium, large and XL. Price is \$7.50 including Provincial Tax. Available through BCI.

Highlights

When Astri Helgerson of Norway, introduced Blissymbols to instructors in Amman, Jordan, she didn't anticipate the far reaching effects.

Recently a ten year old boy from Jordan arrived in Norway to undergo surgery to correct the effects of polio. With him was his Bliss board (with Arabic translation). This became the bridge that established rapport and understanding between the lad and his medical team. And from Astri's report, acceptance of his special way of communicating dissipated much of the added trauma of being away from home and in a strange environment.

Summer 1981 was a first for Blue Mountain Camp in Ontario. A young Blissymbol user arrived with her Blissymbol terminal. We don't know if this started a trend, but this year, other camps are offering computer time (up to 12 hours per day) along with the usual camp activities. They promise to curb the addict.

10th Anniversary Souvenir Displays



Souvenir Display, shown here as an apron, modelled by Sarah Parnes.

Blissymbol users who attended the recent Anniversary Celebrations, received attractive cloth displays as souvenirs.

The display, designed by Shelley Deegan, won first prize in our Vocabulary Display Contest. (See March/82 Bulletin) It consists of 109 symbols printed in black on a 14" square of white cotton. Included are 9 squares for individualized symbols and a "To Help Me Communicate" box. By adding a ribbon, to the top edge, it can be turned into an apron for the active mobile symbol user. The display can be coloured by hand with DEKA or Liquid Embroidery permanent fabric paints.

There are a few remaining at a cost of \$4.00 including Provincial tax. Order through BCI.

Blissymbol Day, May 14th

Blissymbol Day at OCCC was fun as always. Symbol signs decorated the halls and cafeteria. In the cafeteria there were colourful placemats, bearing symbol messages printed on the Apple Computer, from some of our symbol users. One humorous message read "Most people can't talk with their mouths full. I can't talk with my hands full." Other messages were more serious in nature, wishing us a Happy Anniversary. Tea time in the gym included home-made cookies and cakes decorated with symbols. It was a chance for Centre staff to view the many exhibits and displays assembled for the day. Everyone at the Centre identified the Blissymbol staff by the blue T-shirts they wore for the afternoon. This year visitors were invited to watch teldon in action and to see the Blissymbol program.

Request for BCI Library

Through volunteer help, BCI is trying to maintain a current reference list pertaining to Blissymbols. If you have any papers published or prepared or know of unpublished work relating to Blissymbols please send them to: Loretta Biasutti, 34 Grafton Crescent, S.W., Calgary, Alberta, CANADA T3E 4X1.

Loretta has undertaken the task of reading and coding this material and Mary McMahon, a Zonta Club volunteer, sees that the materials are catalogued and entered in BCI's reference library in Toronto.

TRAINING CONTINUES

Toronto, Ontario will be the site of several types of training sessions in 1982.

Elementary Workshop: July 7-9; August 17-20; November 22-24.

Contact: Workshop Co-ordinator, BCI, (416) 425-7835.

Update/Special Interest Workshop — July 10, 1982.

Internship program: November 8 — December 10, 1982.

A five week program directed to professionals who are responsible for developing and supporting Blissymbol programs in their country or region.

Contact: Director of Training, BCI, (416) 425-7835.

International

Milan, Italy — June 7

Changua, Taiwan — August 9-13

Como, Italy — October 4-8.

Contact: Director of Training, BCI.

Affiliates' Training Plans

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania — Correspondence Course — September 2 will be the start of correspondence lessons, to be followed by on-site workshop sessions December 3-4.

Contact: Dr. Eugene McDonald, Blissymbolics Approved Training Center, Home of the Merciful Saviour for Crippled Children, 4400 Baltimore Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 19104, (205) 222-2566.

St. John's, Newfoundland — Elementary Workshop — September 29-30 and October 1 (tentative).

Contact: Jane Green, 75 Circular Road, St. John's, Newfoundland, A1C 2Z4, (709) 726-8773.

Orlando, Florida — Elementary Workshop — October.

Contact: Sandra Osborn, Forrest Park School, 1600 Silver Star Road, Orlando, Florida, 32804, (305) 293-5481.

“Confer with us!”

Professionals in the field of Augmentative Communication, who have access to a computer terminal are invited to participate with BCI in CONFER — a computer conferencing system developed by Bob Parnes at the University of Michigan. For further information regarding Confer's capabilities and costs. Contact Penny Parnes or Shirley McNaughton, BCI.

HELPFUL HINTS

From Sharon Ready of the Southwestern Regional Centre, Blenheim, Ontario, the suggestion that:

Clients' displays be photostated at regular intervals. This small effort can save countless hours. Rationale is:

1) to serve as a reference to vocabulary and symbol location should the original be destroyed or damaged;

2) to serve as a temporary display until a new one can be compiled;

3) to provide a quick reference to the client's vocabulary when assessing what has been learned and projecting future needs;

4) to serve as an emergency display in locations other than where the client's permanent display is kept. Pen pals, and family of institutional residents can employ the client's vocabulary in written correspondence. As well, parents are able to make vocabulary suggestions and observe progress;

5) to serve as a convenient form when assessing the ability to identify previously trained vocabulary.

Thank you Sharron. We agree that this simple procedure can save time and avoid frustration. Further suggestions to make a Blissymbol Instructor's life less hectic will be welcomed by:

Nora Rothschild,
Augmentative Communication Service,
Ontario Crippled Children's Centre,
350 Rumsey Road,
Toronto, Ontario
M4G 1R8

BCI Approved as Sponsor by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association

We are very pleased to announce that the Blissymbolics Communication Institute has been approved by the Continuing Education Board of the Board of Examiners in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (BESPA) to sponsor continuing education in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology.

Attendants at all BCI sponsored training programs will now be eligible to apply for ASHA credits.

For further information, contact Director of Training, BCI.

August World Congress

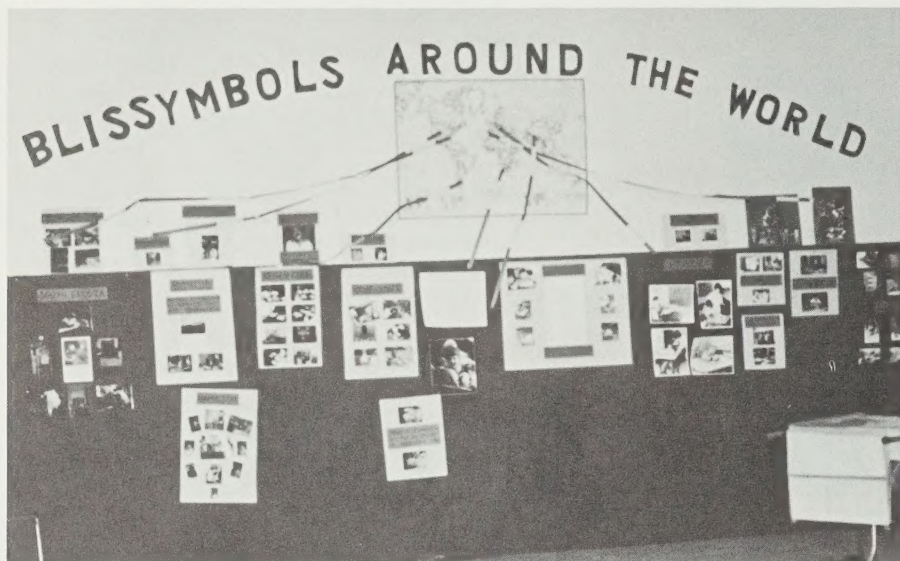
“*Blissymbolics, speech and language issues*” will be one of the significant themes of the World Congress on Mental Retardation August 22-25, 1982, Toronto, Canada.

For further information regarding the World Congress on Mental Retardation, write to:

Congress Secretariat
NIMR
York University Campus
4700 Keele Street
Downsview, Ontario
M3J 1P3

For details regarding the Seminar, “*Blissymbolics: Applications Around the World*” to be held within the World Congress and BCI's August 17-20 Elementary Training Session, write to: Blissymbolics Communication Institute.

From the editor Affiliates Gather



One of the exhibits at the 10th Anniversary party.

In England, April 12-15

For someone attending an international seminar for the first time, the experience can be overwhelming. For those fortunate enough to attend the seminar held in Wallingford in April however, any feelings of inadequacy were quickly dispelled as the participants became active members of a cohesive constructive group.

A gracious Georgian estate, built in 1759 by the renowned author of *Commentaries on the Laws of England* proved to be an ideal environment. It is said that William Blackstone influenced many beyond the shores of England, including the authors of the *Constitution of the United States*. The presence of 30 representatives of Affiliates in 13 countries was concrete evidence of how the Blissymbolics system has influenced many beyond the bounds of Ontario, Canada.

"Unity in diversity"

The unifying factor that brought these people together, representing many different languages, customs and professional disciplines, was Blissymbolics and its application. The diversity lay in the words accompanying the symbols: Norwegian, Danish, Swedish, Icelandic, French, German, Dutch, Flemish, Hebrew, Portuguese, Italian and Arabic. Some displays even had several translations on the same board.

Beginnings, support systems, funding

sources, training, product development, marketing, and consolidation were just a few of the topics that held the attention of everyone present. Again, the individual responses reflected historic and cultural differences, but the unifying factor was the ability of each to relate in a very human way to the experiences we had in common.

The arrival of four colleagues of Pina Gennaro, from Italy was an unexpected plus. They expressed their support of Blissymbolics by offering to hold the next Seminar of European Affiliates in Catania, Italy. A committee was nominated and plans are underway for a meeting in October, 1983.

Warmth, sensitivity and purpose characterized the way in which Ena Davies chaired the sessions. She and her colleagues of the Blissymbolics Communication Resource Centre (U.K.) are to be congratulated on an excellent meeting.

In Canada, May 15-17

Halton Hills Conference Centre, nestled atop the Niagara Escarpment is an ideal setting for a retreat. And retreat we did. Our concern for the balance of nature, ecologically speaking, grew in proportion to the numbers of black flies and mosquitoes that seemed intent upon joining the Seminar or conversely, not allowing anyone to leave the Centre. Repellent liberally applied offered relief to the 22 full-time and up to 35 part-time participants who proceeded to deal with their

concerns and ignore the uninvited guests.

As reports were presented, the breadth of programs became apparent. From BCI and ACS, we heard of the work in maintaining ongoing programs; of the early work of the International Symbol panel; of new symbol monitors being nominated. The presentation of the newly compiled Seminar Kit was received with evident delight, as those present realized the preparation time it would save them.

From the Affiliates, we heard reports of their many varied activities. The issues that prompt research and the development of new products were discussed. Authoring books, developing film strips for PAL; producing films are just a few of the projects. A new member of the BCI Board of Directors demonstrated his willingness to learn about Blissymbolics by volunteering to be a student. He undertook a Symbol drill, developed by an Affiliate for use with the Apple Computer. When 5 happy faces on the screen announced his success, we all cheered; when the 6th face sadly indicated he must redo the sequence, we shared his dismay. The good natured humor remained throughout as projects were shared.

A film brought from a new program in Venezuela, showed a child being introduced to symbols, and happily involved parents working with the therapist and their child. Many present were reminded of the excitement of their own first symbol experiences.

The hard work of agreeing on policies, relationships and responsibilities ended with quiet satisfaction of a job well-done.

Following the Monday morning introduction to Confer (see page 5, this Bulletin), the closing statements spoke of renewal and an appreciation of the way in which Shirley and BCI staff have responded to all.

Luncheon over, bags packed and goodbyes said, we each started the journey back to home base with a commitment to return a little earlier to Halton Hills Conference Centre next year — sans mosquitoes!



©BLISSYMBOLICS COMMUNICATION INSTITUTE, 1982

The Bulletin is a publication for the staff and associate members of the Blissymbolics Communication Institute.

Editor: Janet May

Send letters, suggestions and news items to:

Editor

Blissymbolics Communication Institute

350 Rumsey Road

Toronto, Ontario

Canada

M4G 1R8